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*AND ELSEWHERE*

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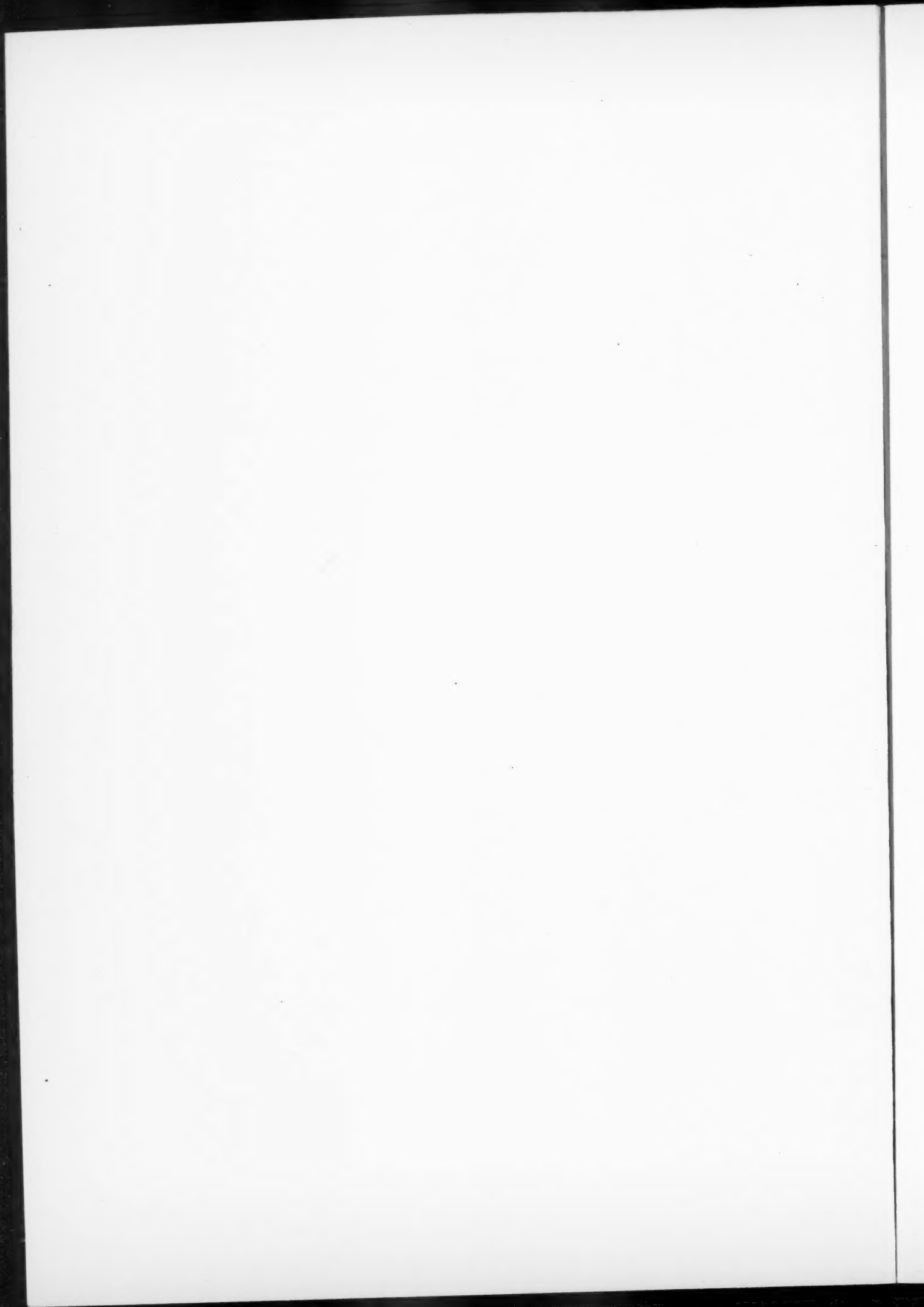
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VOLUME XVI • NUMBER I • DECEMBER MCMXXVII

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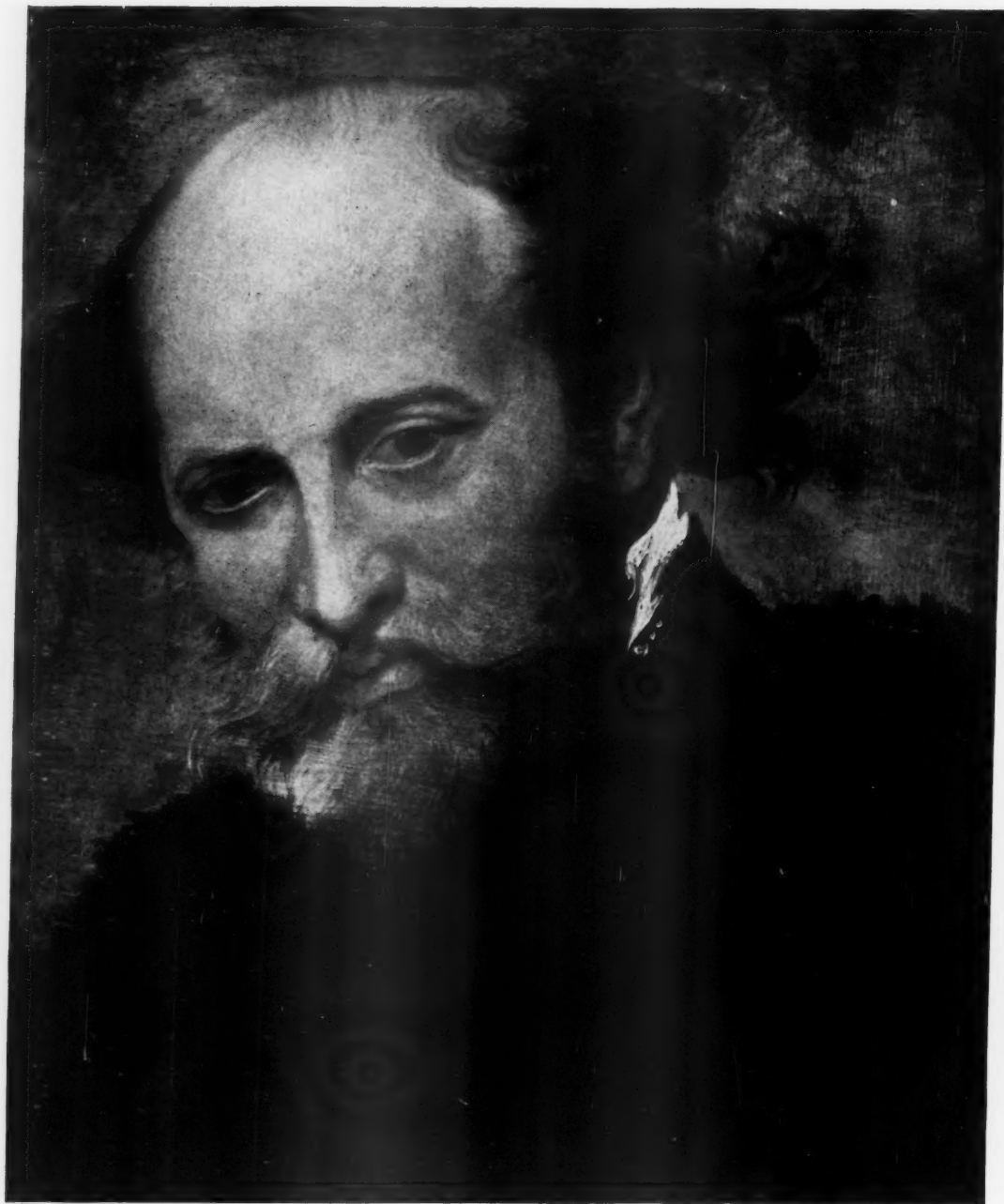


FIG. 1. RUEENS: SELF PORTRAIT  
*Property of Mr. William R. Timken, New York*



ART IN AMERICA *AND ELSEWHERE*  
AN ILLUSTRATED BI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE  
VOLUME XVI • NUMBER I • DECEMBER 1927



AN UNKNOWN SELF-PORTRAIT BY RUBENS

BY FRANK E. WASHBURN FREUND

*New York City*

WHILE we have many self-portraits of Rembrandt it was only rarely that Rubens did his own portrait. This fact is of great significance for the characters of the two masters: the introspective nature of Rembrandt and the exuberance of Rubens which urged him to conquer the outside world.

Rubens only painted himself once or twice with his first and his second wife and another time walking in his garden. These are his famous pictures in Munich (Rubens and Isabella Brant and Rubens and Helene Fourment) and one in the possession of Alfred de Rothschild in Paris. It is obvious that painting himself alone did not interest him much. He apparently only did it at the request of others. We know for

It may be of interest in this connection to compare with the double portrait in the Schlichting Collection the masterfully executed Self-portrait by Van Dyck (Fig. 4) which has recently come to America (formerly in the possession of the Duke of Grafton) and is now in the collection of Mr. Jules Bache of New York. The comparison of the two paintings seems to prove conclusively that as Mr. Freund points out the picture in the Louvre is not by Van Dyck's own hand. It is most likely the work of an inferior contemporary of Rubens, who combined the two excellent studies by Van Dyck (in the Strassburg Museum) and by Rubens (in the Timken Collection) forming out of them a rather unbalanced composition for the sake of representing the portraits of the two famous artists on one canvas.

THE EDITOR.

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instance that the self-portrait in Windsor Castle was done at the special request of the Prince of Wales, and similar court commissions probably account for the other three well-known self-portraits in Vienna, and the Uffizi (one being a replica of that in Windsor).

All the more gratifying, therefore, is the appearance of a hitherto unknown but very charming self-portrait which, in its natural bearing and easy, free treatment seems much more likely to have been the outcome of a happy moment rather than a special order. The picture, painted on a mahogany panel (measuring  $16\frac{3}{4}$  by  $13\frac{1}{4}$  inches), was formerly in the possession of Mr. S. Robinson, St. James's, London, and recently became part of the collection of Mr. Wm. R. Timken in New York (Fig. 1).

The painting has rightly been ascribed to the year 1615 or thereabouts by Dr. W. R. Valentiner. It shows Rubens, therefore, at the age of almost forty, full of health and vigor. It is painted with the flowing brush and rhythmical touch and has those beautifully transparent glazes which are so characteristic of this great master-painter. Whilst the head has been brought to a point of high finish, the painting of the coat has remained somewhat sketchy, but this as well as the masterly treatment of the background, shading off from an almost burning red on the right to cooler tones on the left, help to throw the head into relief and to give emphasis to its upper part, which, in this portrait as in the famous one in the Uffizi, is uncovered, and in that way allows us to study freely the remarkable forehead with its wonderfully shaped dome. The importance of the little panel is still more enhanced by the circumstance that in contrast to the Uffizi "self-Portrait" which is in three-quarter profile, it is almost in full face. Also it is obviously the more intimate one of the two, the one in the Uffizi being more in the nature of an "official" portrait. So this portrait is, in a way, quite unique and therefore of the greatest importance in the whole oeuvre of Rubens.

Nothing is known about its history before it became part of the Robinson Collection in London. But it is almost certain to have once served as a model to the youthful Van Dyck for a double-portrait in which he painted himself by the side of his master. This double-portrait, or perhaps only an early copy of it, hangs in the Baron Schlichting Collection in the Louvre, and is there listed as an "oeuvre de jeunesse de Van Dyck" and entitled "Portraits de Rubens et de Van Dyck"<sup>1</sup> (Fig.

<sup>1</sup> The following notes about this painting were kindly supplied to me by the Louvre authorities to whom I am greatly indebted for the permission to publish the double-portrait: "It hung formerly (under the name of Rubens) in the Palazzo Colombrano at Naples, the home of the Cavaliere Niccolo San-

2). The painting, however, is not of very high quality, and apparently that is the reason why Monsieur Louis Hourtig in his "Le Musée du Louvre" raises doubt as to its authorship.

However that may be, even a cursory comparison between the Rubens as represented in the Louvre double-portrait and the Rubens of the New York self-portrait shows one thing plainly, namely, that the latter must have been the model from which the one in the Louvre portrait was copied, with the single and not too happy addition of part of the right arm and hand.

That such is the case and that it cannot have been painted from life — if, for the sake of argument, we forget for a moment the striking similarity of pose and the whole make-up — is proved by the only too obvious difference in quality and spontaneity between the head of Rubens, copied rather painstakingly from a picture, and the head of Van Dyck, himself, which, when compared with the hardness and tightness of the other, shows fluency as well as a softer, easier, less labored touch and pose.

All this is apparent even in the mediocre Louvre picture, which itself, as already stated, may very likely only be a copy after a lost original by Van Dyck. I am strengthened in the supposition of its being only a copy by the fact that another version of the same double-portrait, also of very inferior quality, is at present in the possession of an American collector, indicating that in those days the double-portrait of the two great masters must have been well known and much liked, and therefore copies of it ordered or simply "cribbed."

In this connection it may be of interest to recall the fact that when Sir Joshua Reynolds' Collection was dispersed after his death (at Christie's in 1795) there was in the sale a painting entitled "Rubens and Two Other Artists," painted by Van Dyck when he was eighteen years of age, which fetched £ 147.0.0 and was bought by Mr. John J. Angerstein, part of whose collection afterwards formed the nucleus of the London National Gallery. If the arrangement of the double-portrait by Van Dyck in the Louvre be taken into consideration, it becomes almost a certainty that this painting in its present state is not complete and that it must have contained, at one time at least, a third por-

tangelo, Minister of the Interior of the Kingdom of Naples; was exhibited in Brussels at the Exhibition of Belgian Art in the Seventeenth Century in 1910 under No. 145; and was engraved, under the name of Rubens, by Tommaso Aloysio. A small sketch for the same head of Van Dyck hangs in the Strasbourg Museum. Cf. Abbe Romanelli: "Napoli Antica e Moderna," Naples, 1815, volume III, page 93; Emil Schaeffer: "Jahrbuch der Kgl. Preuss. Kunstsammlungen, volume XXXI, 1910, page 104-109; Max Rooses, volume IV, page 259.

trait, for otherwise it would be more than strange that Van Dyck would bend his head away from Rubens and look in such an animated way towards the left, out of the picture, as if attracted by some person or thing there. Could it be possible that at some time or other, before this double-portrait came into the Naples Collection, it had been a portrait of *three* artists, perhaps even the very picture which once had belonged to Sir Joshua Reynolds, then later on to Mr. Angerstein, and was afterwards re-sold at the latter's sale in 1824?

To return to the Rubens self-portrait. It looks almost as if Rubens, after having done the little portrait of himself, at present in New York, perhaps as a preparation for some larger compositions (in which, as is well known, he quite frequently introduced figures bearing his own features) had given it as a cherished present to his most gifted pupil and as if the latter, in the pride of his young genius, had wanted to put himself side by side with his older friend and adviser whom he was so soon to rival.

An engraving by Paulus Pontius (the left part of which is reproduced here) (Fig. 3), to my mind, makes this almost a certainty. The engraving represents the double-portrait of Rubens (to the left) and Van Dyck (to the right) amidst the usual baroque emblems and adornments so characteristic of this well-known engraver of works by Rubens. The print bears the inscription "Ant. Van Dyck facies pinxit." When this engraved portrait of Rubens is compared with the master's self-portrait and the Rubens portrait in the Louvre painting, it will, I think, be at once apparent that there must be some connection between the three. The hand and its gesture in both the engraving and the Louvre picture are practically identical, which can scarcely be merely accidental, and the other changes by Paulus Pontius himself (the engraving states: "Paul Pontius facies sculp."): the handsome collar, the toga-like cloak thrown around the shoulders in Roman fashion and the abundance of hair falling romantically over Rubens' forehead (at an age when, to speak euphemistically, Rubens' forehead extended pretty far back on his head), can easily be explained as embellishing additions by the engraver who wanted to represent his "hero" at his best. For this engraving, one must remember, was meant to supply the demand of the art-loving public of his time much in the same way as a photograph does today.

After stripping the engraved portrait of all these changes and additions and taking into account the different mediums employed and the





FIG. 4. VAN DYCK: SELF PORTRAIT  
*Collection of Mr. Jules Bache, New York*



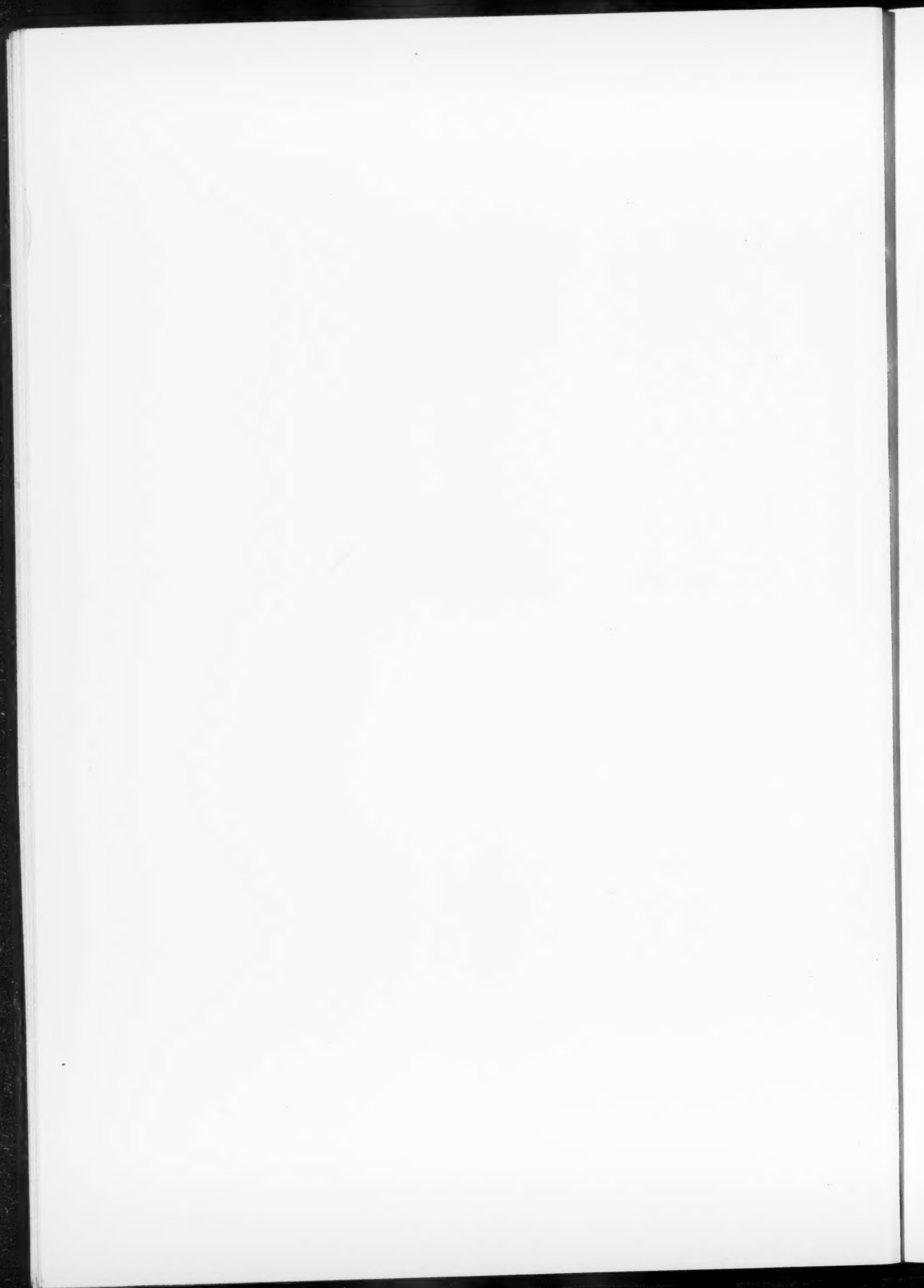
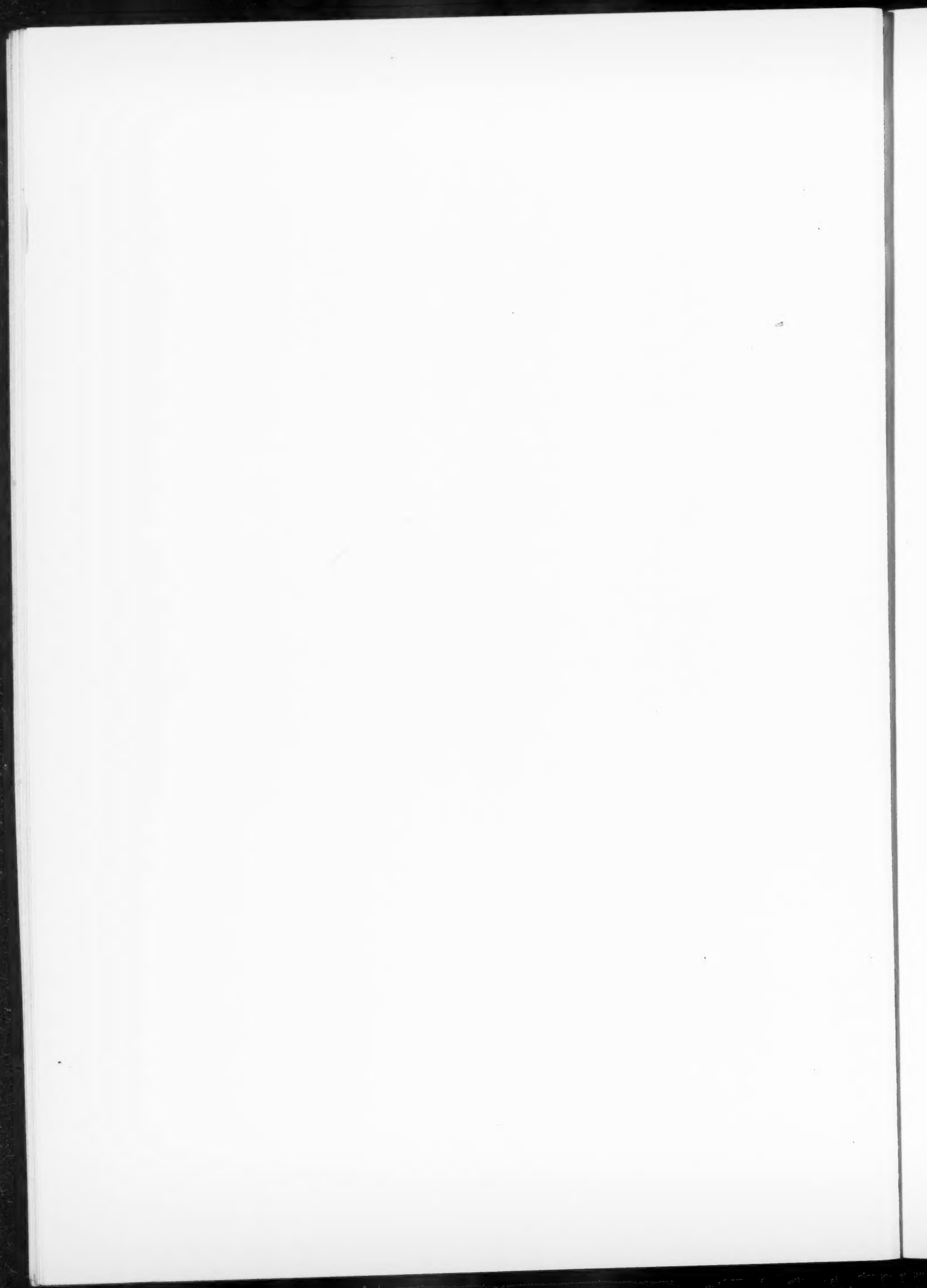




FIG. 2. PORTRAIT OF RUBEENS AND VAN DYCK  
*Schlichting Collection, The Louvre, Paris*



FIG. 3. PORTRAIT OF RUBEENS  
*Detail of an Engraving by Paulus Pontius*



fact that a lesser master was at work here, especially apparent in the treatment of the eyes, the parenthood of the self-portrait to this engraving also cannot, I think, be denied.

As Van Dyck in this engraving is shown about ten years older than in the Louvre double-portrait, it must be surmised that Paulus Pontius did his engraving a number of years after both the self-portrait and the Louvre painting (or its original) had been painted, using for his double-portrait the material he liked best and thought most suitable for his purpose of pleasing his public with a fine double-portrait of the two most celebrated Flemish masters of the time. Although there is no date given on the engraving, the fact that the inscription around the Van Dyck portrait runs: "Antonius Van Dyck *Eques Pictor Antver*," proves that the engraving must have been done *after* 1632 when Van Dyck was knighted by King Charles I.

Thus a chain is established, binding the two paintings and the engraving by Paulus Pontius together. It leads from Rubens' studio where he painted his self-portrait, to that of Van Dyck where for a time, very likely, it hung as a gift from that older master to the younger by whom it was afterwards used as a model for his double (or, most probably, triple) portrait. The latter, somehow, found its way into Sir Joshua Reynolds' collection; was after his death acquired by Mr. Angerstein; was sold again when the Angerstein collection was dispersed and must afterwards have drifted to Naples and then into Baron von Schlichting's Collection, and now hangs as part of that Collection in the Louvre. Meanwhile an engraving from it was made by Paulus Pontius and proofs of it can still be seen occasionally. But the self-portrait itself was lost sight of for a very long time till it was found in a London art store a year or two ago and sold to an American collector. Thus ends, for the present at least, the romance of this highly important portrait of Rubens by himself.

## A PAINTING BY ANTONIO VIVARINI

BY F. MASON PERKINS

*Assisi, Italy*

THE hitherto unpublished panel reproduced in the accompanying plate is a fairly recent addition to the small but fastidiously-chosen collection of Mr. and Mrs. Percy S. Straus of New York. Although at one time the property of the Earl of Northesk and consequently not unknown to such frequenters of the auction-room as were present at the sale of that nobleman's artistic treasures, at London, some ten or more years ago, the picture, when first seen by me in the hands of one of its subsequent owners, as recently as 1925, had apparently never yet received any definite "attribution" and was still vaguely labelled as the work of an anonymous Venetian painter of the fifteenth century. That its real author should have remained so long unrecognized is, considering the painting's pronounced stylistic character, not a little surprising. That we have here a production not of any problematic "anonimo" but of no less clearly defined a master than Antonio Vivarini of Murano is, in fact, fairly evident and will, I trust, become fully so to any possibly sceptical student who will take the trouble to compare our reproduction with the photographs of a few of that artist's acknowledged works, such, for instance, as the signed altarpiece in the Cathedral-Church of Pirano (Istria), the somewhat similar polyptych in the Brera at Milan, and the fine ancona (executed in collaboration with his younger brother Bartolommeo) in the Gallery at Bologna. The picture at New York possesses, it is true, peculiarities of its own, but its connection with the above-mentioned paintings is so close and unmistakable as to leave no room for doubt as to its true paternity.

In the presentation of his subject, Antonio has made use of a motive — that of the Virgin adoring the Christ-Child outstretched upon her knees — which, if not actually an invention of his own, was at least so successfully developed and popularized by him as to remain a constant favourite among the Venetian painters of his own and of a later generation. We find this motive, in various stages of modification and re-adaptation, in the ancona at Bologna already mentioned, in several of Bartolommeo's independent paintings, in not a few of those of his nephew Alvise, in the rare panel by Frate Antonio da Negroponte in the Church of S. Francesco della Vigna at Venice, in Giovanni Bellini's beautiful early picture in the Accademia of that city, and in various





ANTONIO VIVARINI: MADONNA AND CHILD  
*Collection of Mr. and Mrs. Percy S. Straus, New York*







paintings by other Venetian artists of the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries. Of all these many versions, that of the panel in the Straus Collection is one of the simplest and at the same time one of the most striking. In it, it is true, the figure of the Christ-Child is treated in a purely naturalistic manner, and even, perhaps, somewhat less attractively than in certain other of its author's pictures, but in that of the Virgin, Antonio has produced a design that is almost hieratic in its monumental character and form. As a type the master has here given us the most dignified and the most truly religious of all his representations of the Madonna. It is not from her facial beauty alone, however, that he derives his principal effect. Her grave seriousness of feature and expression, her solemn attitude of silent adoration, the broad draping of the folds and the spreading outline of her mantle, and the peculiar pattern of her throne, all combine to present us with an image of singular impressiveness, as well as one of unusual spiritual and decorative charm, the like of which is rarely to be found in Venetian painting of the time.

As regards technique and execution, the picture is, again, not without a special interest, in that it reveals a certain marked development in its author's technical habits. The accentuated linear character, the drily sculpturesque modelling, and the thin transparent colouring, so peculiar to most of Antonio's works, have here apparently given way to a more purely "pictorial" method of treatment. Without any noticeable diminution of their plastic or structural values,<sup>1</sup> the figures and the draperies are here handled with a breadth and looseness seldom to be met with, to a like extent, in the master's other panels. There is in them a visible and seemingly conscious effort at the obtaining of results by means of the palette rather than of the stylus — by painting rather than by sheer outline and design. The brush-work is here both freer and "fuller," the colour itself deeper and more substantial than in almost any other of Antonio's paintings so far known to us. Chromatically the picture is, indeed, both opulent and satisfying, the dominating red of the Virgin's gorgeously-figured cloak, more especially, producing, together with the soft-toned gold of the background, an effect of extraordinary richness and quiet splendour.

Without attempting to fix, with any pretence at exactness, the prob-

<sup>1</sup> It is interesting to note how the body of the Infant Christ, carefully modelled as it is itself, rests upon the Virgin's knees without any very compelling indication of pressure or of weight — a peculiarity due in part, no doubt, to technical difficulties produced by its position, and one that is to be met with in other presentations of the same motive and compositions on the part of certain of Antonio's successors.

able date of its execution, we may safely place our picture in the ripest period of its author's development. In it, as we have already seen, Antonio appears to have partially, if not completely, abandoned his earlier "Muranese" manner in favour of a style that already foreshadows that of a succeeding generation of Venetian painters and which reaches its full development in the art of Giovanni Bellini and his school. Interesting as it may be, however, from the point of view of iconography, technique, and style, it is primarily on account of its purely aesthetic merits that Mr. and Mrs. Straus's panel calls for publication. In this respect it is beyond question one of the most deeply attractive, as it is certainly also one of the most beautifully decorative, existing examples of a phase of Venetian painting which is, as yet, none too generously represented in American collections and museums.<sup>2</sup>

### THE LOST PREDELLA OF AN ALTARPIECE BY DOMENICO GHIRLANDAJO

BY GEORG GRONAU

*Florence, Italy*

SOME years ago in Berlin I was shown a small Predella panel which represented in a charming and most disarming fashion the battle between the Archangels and the Devils (Fig. 1), and I was told that connoisseurs had mentioned the name of Fiorenzo di Lorenzo in connection with it. It seemed to me, however, that this little painting was undeniably closely related to Domenico Ghirlandajo, and must either be by this master himself, by his chief collaborator (and brother-in-law), Mainardi, or even possibly by that assistant on whom Mr. Berenson had conferred the nickname of *Alunno di Domenico*, before his real name Bartolommeo di Giovanni had been discovered. Not long afterwards this charming little panel was acquired by the Detroit Museum.

Not content, however, with having lent some assistance toward a correct attribution of the picture, I was even more interested to discover of what particular altarpiece it must once have formed a part. No

<sup>2</sup> The picture is, on the whole, in a very satisfactory state of preservation. The flesh-parts are not exempt from certain past retouchings, but these have in no way altered or affected their original character or expression. The remainder of the painting is virtually intact. The colour still retains, almost unlowered, its pristine tonality and effectiveness. The present frame is no longer the original one, but an admirable reproduction of a model of the period.

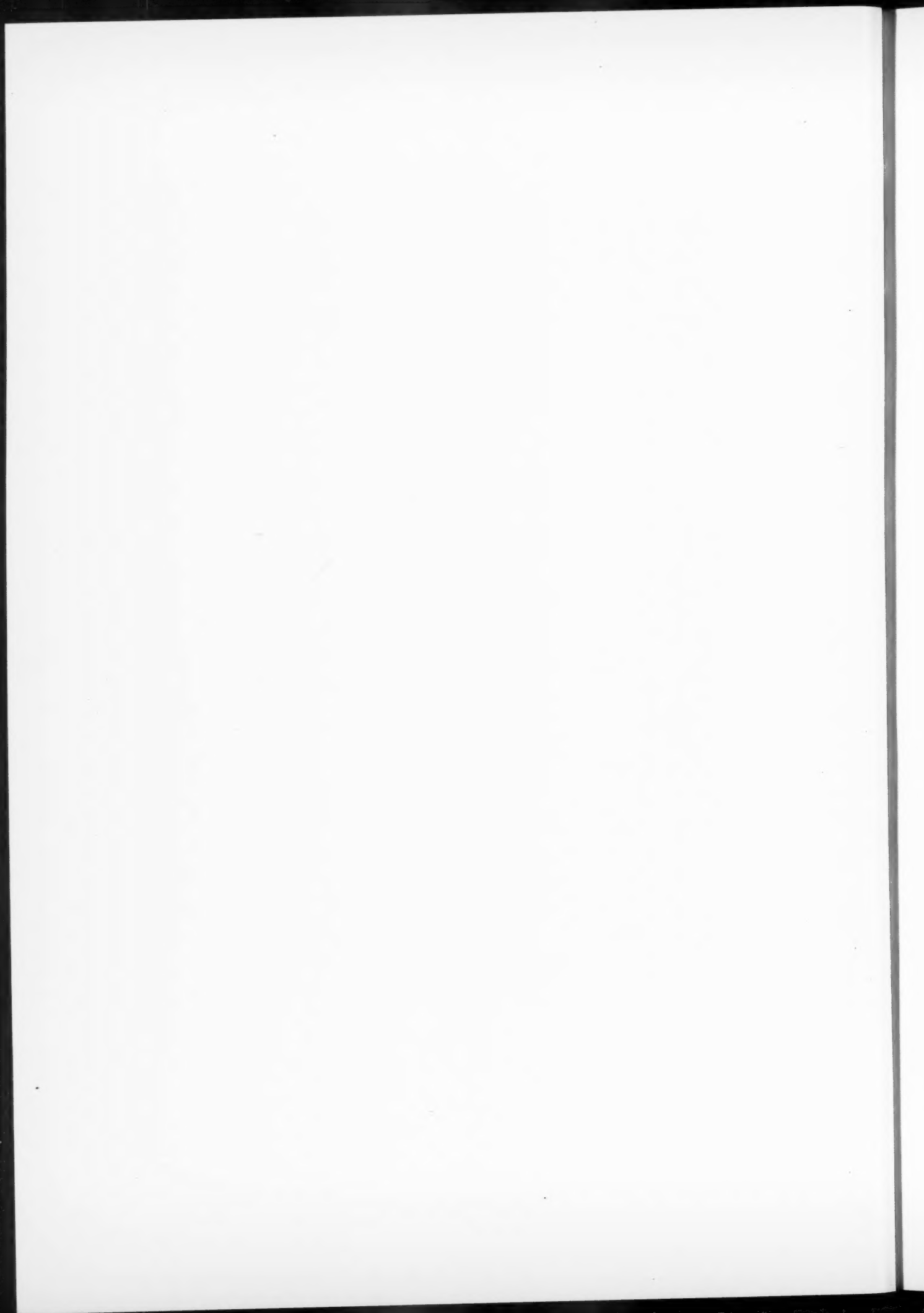


FIG. 3. SHOP OF GHIRLANDAJO: ST. JUSTUS DISTRIBUTING BREAD TO SOLDIERS  
*National Gallery, London*



FIG. 1. SHOP OF GHIRLANDAJO: BATTLE BETWEEN ARCHANGELS AND DEVILS  
*Institute of Art, Detroit, Mich.*





predella panel was ever designed as an individual unit, but, combined with three, five or even seven other units forms a long, narrow panel, which, supported by the altar itself, forms the base of the altarpiece. In accordance with Florentine custom, this little panel must have been related to one of the Archangels in the painting above it — in all probability to the protagonist, St. Michael.

In searching among the great altarpieces by Ghirlandajo, I speedily came upon one of his most famous works — the altarpiece depicting the Madonna between two Archangels and with two kneeling Bishops which hangs in the Uffizi (Fig. 2), its predella had not been removed with it when, in 1857 the picture was transferred from the Della Calza church. It is, of course, possible that even at that date the predella was no longer in its original place. This painting seemed to me the only one to which the somewhat unusual conception of the predella was akin (at the moment the only related work I can call to mind is a rather droll picture by Neri di Bicci from the former Castiglione Collection) but there was no means of arriving at any certainty unless at least one other portion of the predella should come to light.

Later in studying some photographs—"playing patience" with them, as the late Dr. Lippmann once aptly termed it — I came across one that had long been familiar to me. It reproduced a painting in the National Gallery, London (Fig. 3), and was stylistically closely related to the other predella — having the same slender figures, with the same cheerful, childlike features. The actual subject of this picture seemed open to question. All that could be distinguished was a Bishop standing beneath a city gate distributing something that might be bread to some warlike looking youths. That, at least, was the conception of the Gallery Catalogue which describes the scene as follows: "David receiving the Shewbread from the High Priest." It did not need much reflection to decide that this conception was erroneous. In the first place, it is not in accord with the Bible, which states explicitly that David came alone to the High Priest; secondly a predella (and there is no question about this being one) always relates to some saint in the large altarpiece, and there is no Saint David; thirdly, the figure in the doorway is no High Priest, but a Bishop invested with a Saint's halo.

The next step was to turn back to the altarpiece in the Uffizi to see if this scene could be connected with either of the saints depicted there. One of the two Bishops in this painting is the patron saint of Florence, St. Zenobius, whose miracles have been so constantly portrayed. One



instantly realizes that this could not be one of them. This left only the second figure, St. Justus (Giusto) of Volterra to whose titular church this altarpiece originally belonged. Among the miracles attributed to this saint (their portrayals are among the iconographic rarities) is one whereby, following the distribution of bread by him to the soldiery, enemies who were besieging Volterra were destroyed. This established, firstly, that the two panels in Detroit and London belonged together, and secondly that I was correct in my assumption that the Battle of the Angels belonged to the altarpiece in the Uffizi.

In a little essay in which I discussed these matters at some length,<sup>1</sup> I expressed the hope that the three pieces which were then still missing might come to light. One of the panels must obviously treat of the Archangel Raffael who was particularly popular in Florence as a patron saint; a second of the Bishop Zenobius, and the third, the central one, of the Madonna or of the Christ. Very frequently a *pietà* was introduced in this position.

Through coincidence — on whose friendly offices we must to some extent rely in such research — a set of photographs was brought to my attention which a well-known authority had brought back with him from America to the Institute of art history in Florence. Among them I noticed reproductions of three paintings in The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, where they are ascribed to Botticini, and from these pictures without any question the technique and manner of the painter of the Detroit and London panels looked out at me. The first one depicted the marriage of the Virgin (Fig. 4), the second the famous miracle of St. Zenobius in which the tree beside the Baptistery bore leaves in winter as the body of the saint was carried by (Fig. 5); and the third that scene where the young Tobias, on the advice of the Archangel, takes the head, liver and gall from a fish whereby sight shall be restored to his aged father (Fig. 6) — in other words exactly the three scenes necessary to complete the predella for the Ghirlandajo altarpiece.

Quite aside from the extreme probability that the three scenes on these panels are those necessary to the completion of the predella, and aside from their absolute identity of style, one small extraneous circumstance makes their mutual relationship certain; the three little panels in New York are bordered by a narrow black line, and this identical line also appears on the Detroit and London panels.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Apollo*, vol. IV, August, 1926, p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> Thanks to the courtesy of Sir Charles Holmes, I was able to closely examine the London panel. Its measurements coincide exactly with those of the New York panels, 16 $\frac{3}{8}$ " by 6 $\frac{3}{8}$ ".



FIG. 2. DOMENICO GHIRLANDAJO: ALTARPIECE (WITH PREDELLE RESTORED)

*Uffizi Gallery, Florence*



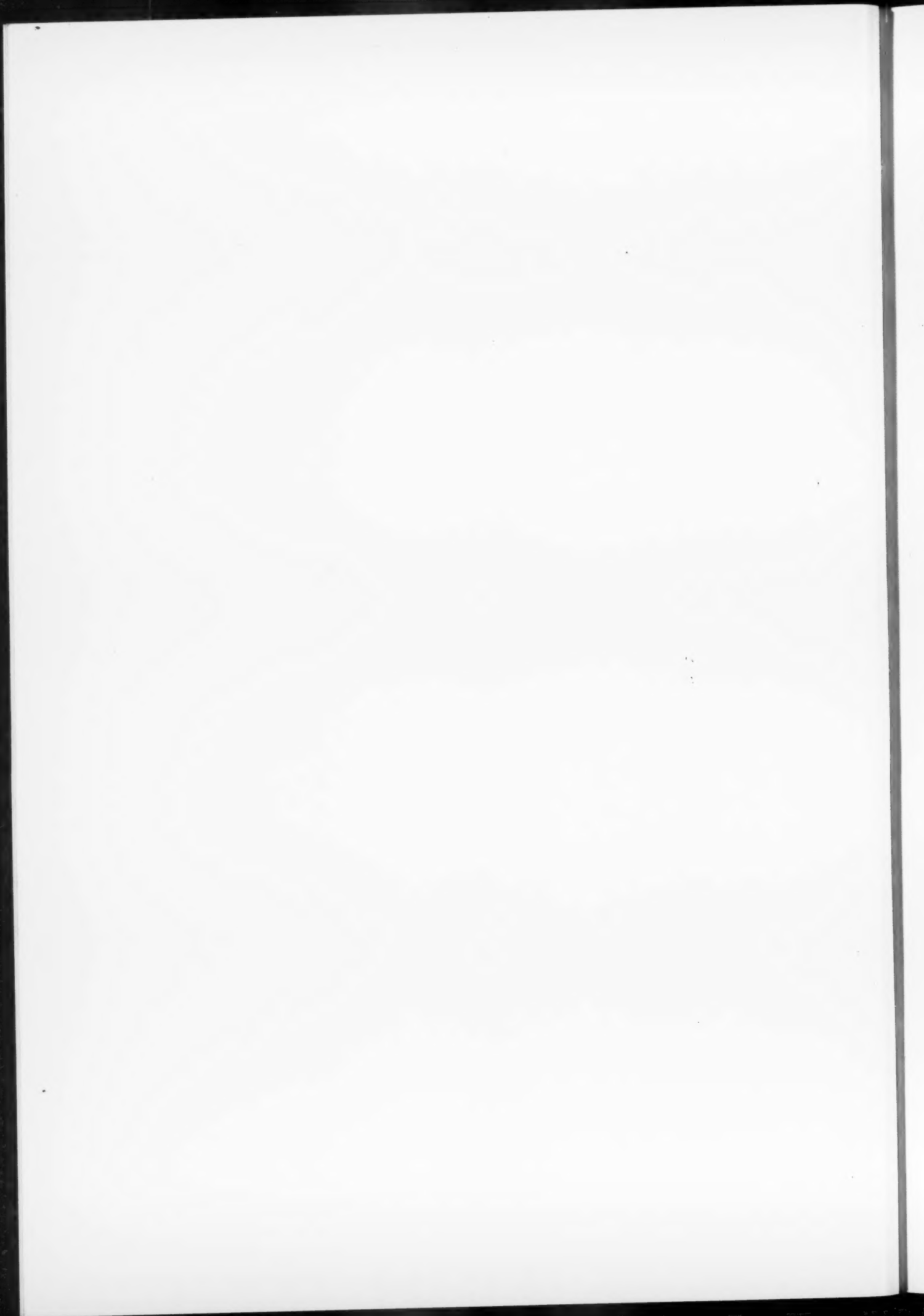






FIG. 6. SHOP OF GHIRLANDAJO: TOBIAS AND THE ARCHANGEL  
*The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*

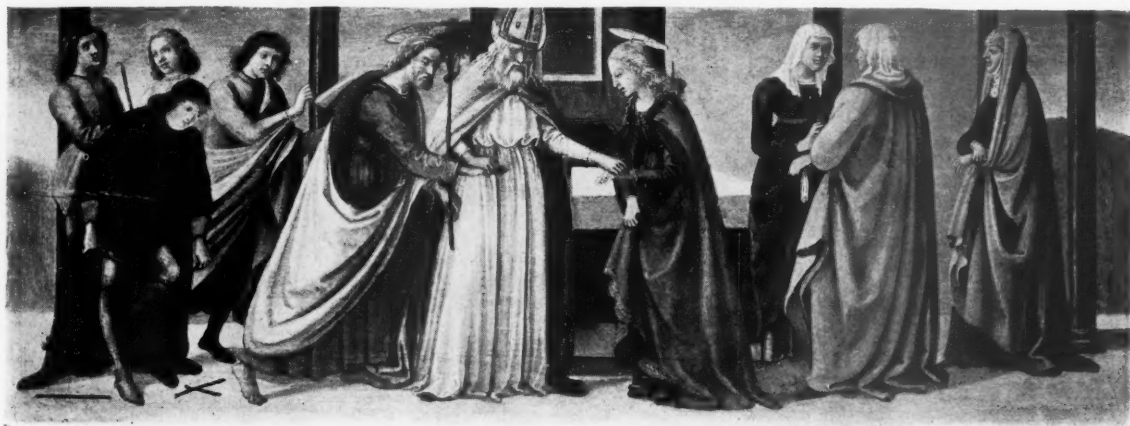


FIG. 4. SHOP OF GHIRLANDAJO: THE MARRIAGE OF THE VIRGIN  
*The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*

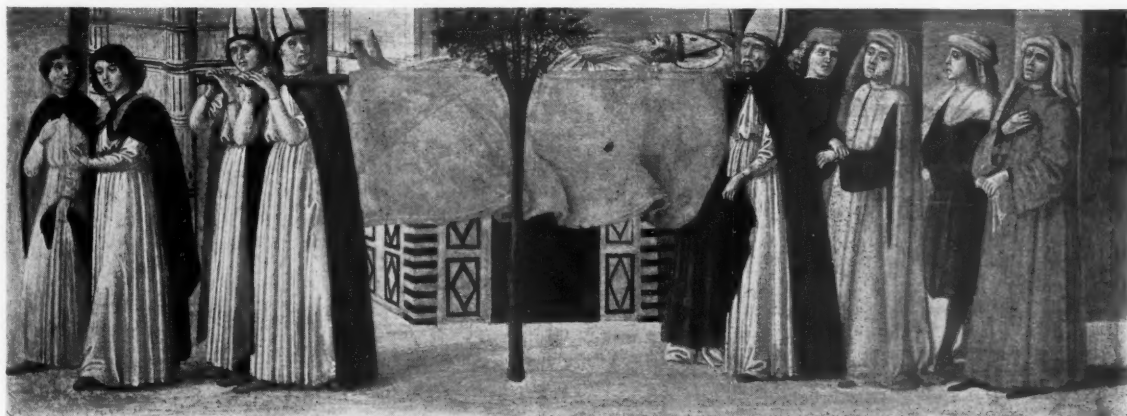


FIG. 5. SHOP OF GHIRLANDAJO: THE MIRACLE OF SAINT ZENOBIOUS  
*The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York*





Art lovers and scholars engaged in art research were much interested lately in the reconstruction of the lost predella for the altarpiece of Domenico Veneziano of which, until that time, only the portion in Berlin was available. Our endeavour to restore its predella to Ghirlandajo's altarpiece falls under the same category, and moreover establishes this master as the author of the predella of the picture in the Uffizi numbered 8388 and of the altarpiece in the cathedral at Lucca. In view of the fresh and lively manner in which the scenes are depicted, the composition of these individual panels may undoubtedly be attributed to the head of the Ghirlandajo workshop.

In this special field — the reconstruction of the masterpieces of the past — much work remains to be done. Here and there in the most diverse collections there are to be found separate predella panels which should receive more attention from those engaged in research than has hitherto been the case. It is not sufficient to determine on stylistic grounds to which master such a little painting may be attributed (no matter how cleverly this be done), we should seek further to reunite these "disiecta membra" with the parent body of which they form a part.

## SOME FLORENTINE PICTURES OF THE TRECENTO IN RUSSIA

BY VICTOR LASAREFF

*Moscow*

**D**URING the Revolution a number of Trecento pictures, which were always scarce in Russian public collections, came into the possession of the Russian Museums. At present the Hermitage owns a sufficiently complete selection of Italian paintings of the fourteenth century as well as a few interesting examples of the thirteenth century. In the Moscow Museum of Fine Arts and in the Museum of Kiev the Trecento painting is more feebly represented. However here also some first class works, that escaped the notice of art critics, are to be found. In the present article I intend to deal with some pictures of the Florentine school in the Hermitage and in the Museum of Fine Arts.

The earliest in date is a well preserved tondo, representing the Sal-

vator Mundi. The figure of Christ is set against a golden background; over his lilac garment a blue mantle is thrown, forming a sharp contrast with the red book. The face of Christ is distinguished by the broad proportions, characteristic of the physiognomical structure of Giotto and his school. Convincing analogies are easily to be found in the frescoes of the Capella degli Scrovegni at Padua (Fig. 2), where we see in the vault a medallion of the Salvator Mundi closely resembling our tondo. An identical presentation of the Saviour figures in the fresco with the scenes of the Prayer in the Garden of Olives and of the Flagellation. The fresco mentioned belongs certainly to the same follower of Giotto who decorated the walls of the choir. The two Paduan frescoes show clearly that the tondo here published issued from the school of Giotto. A comparison with the tondo in the collection of Lady Jekyll in London<sup>1</sup> and with the standing figure of Christ in the Chapel of St. Nicholas in the lower church at Assisi also speaks in favour of such an attribution. The first is by one of Giotto's closest followers, whereas the second is the work of the so-called master of the St. Nicholas frescoes, whom Mr. Sirèn, without sufficient reasons, identifies with Maestro Stefano Fiorentino.<sup>2</sup> Thus, all the paintings that can be confronted with our tondo belong to the number of works executed under the immediate influence of Giotto. This gives us entire right to regard it as the production of one of the closest followers of the great Florentine. The resemblance in style of our tondo to the Paduan fresco and to the figure of Christ in the chapel of St. Nicholas notwithstanding, I do not venture to identify its author with the painter who decorated the choir of the Capella degli Scrovegni or with the Pseudo Maestro Stefano. I think such an identification inadmissible — on principle, as well as for lack of material. The tondo must be placed in the second decade of the fourteenth century.

The nearest in date is a fragment, representing the full-length standing figure of St. James Major (Fig. 3). The colouring is sustained in delicate, light tones: the saint, clad in a greenish-blue robe and an azure mantle, stands very effectively against a golden background. The bright-

<sup>1</sup> See *Burlington Magazine*, 1911 (XX), p. 66.

<sup>2</sup> The oeuvre of this master, which I propose to deal with on a different occasion, shows, besides the influence of Giotto, the strongest connection with Roman traditions, demonstrated, for instance, by the fact of his resemblance in style to the St. Francis cycle, derived from the Roman school and executed with the share of the master of the St. Cecily altarpiece. The greater part of the pictures ascribed by Mr. Sirèn to the Pseudo Maestro Stefano (Giotto and some of his followers, I, pp. 97-105; some paintings by a follower of Giotto. *Burlington Magazine*, 1923 (XLIII), p. 259-269), have in reality very little in common with his art (particularly the Madonnas in Bergen and in Berlin).





FIG. 1. A FOLLOWER OF GIOTTO: SALVA-TOR MUNDI  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*



FIG. 2. A FOLLOWER OF GIOTTO: SALVA-TOR MUNDI. PRAYER IN THE GARDEN, A FLAGELLATION  
*Arena Chapel, Padua*



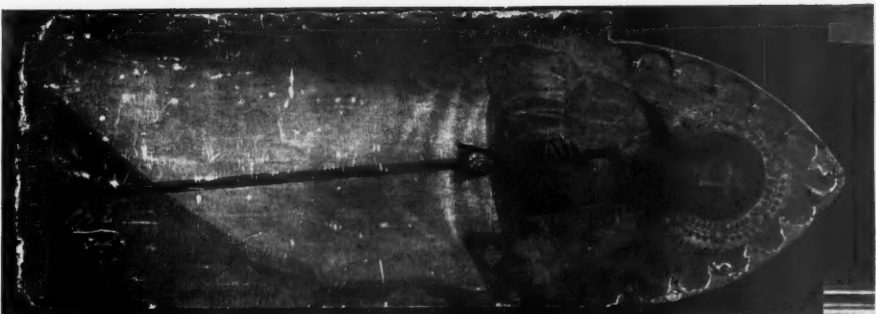


FIG. 3. NICCOLO DI TOMMASO:  
ST. JAMES, MAJOR  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*



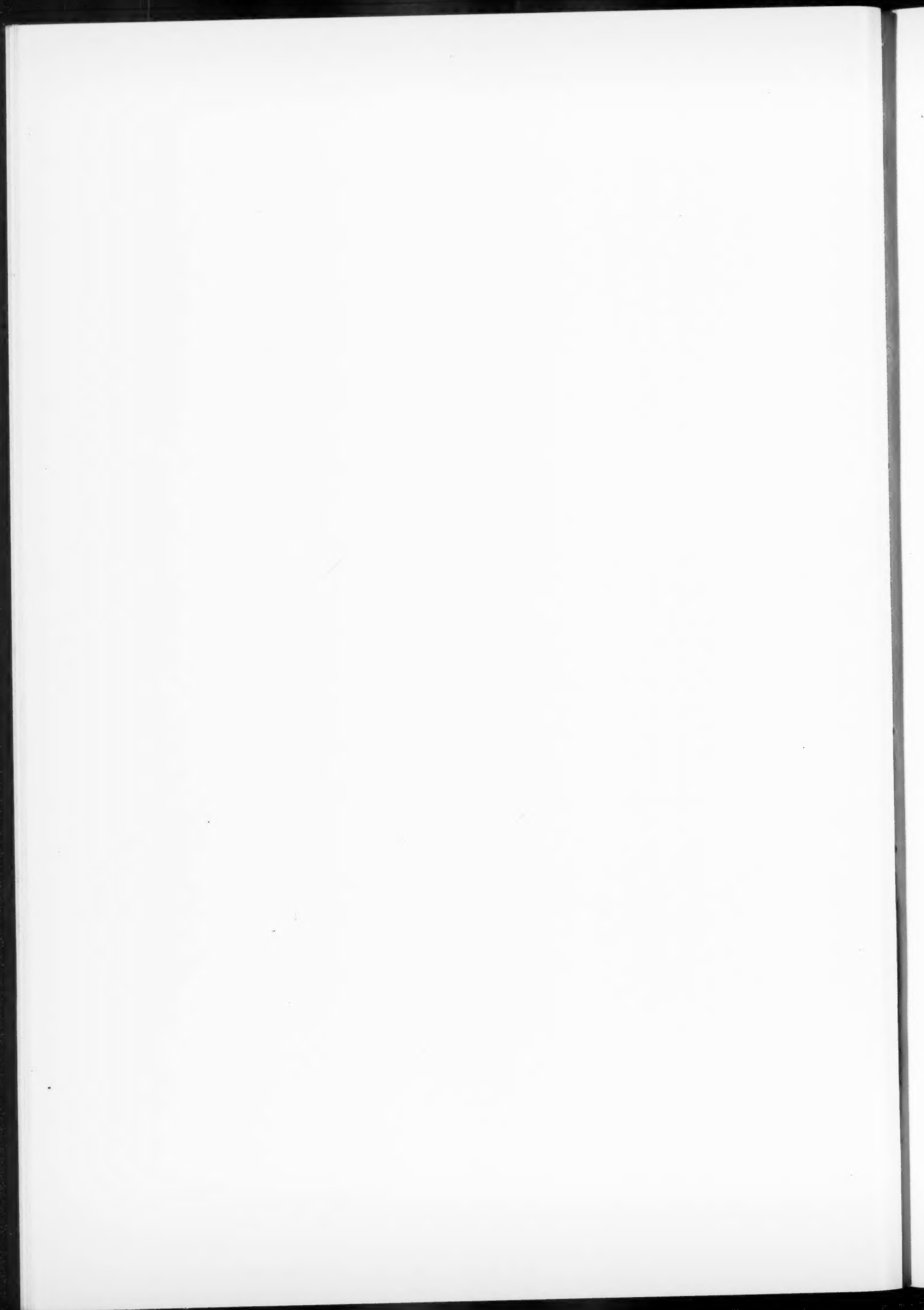
FIG. 5. SPINELLO ARETINO:  
ST. BENEDICT  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*



FIG. 6. SPINELLO ARETINO:  
ST. PONTIANUS  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*



FIG. 8. LORENZO DI NICCOLO GERINI: MADONNA  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*





red carpet is decorated with a gold and azure pattern. The type of the face as well as the whole style of the execution make it indubitable that the fragment described belongs to the school of Andrea Orcagna and his brother Nardo. It is in the works of such masters as, for instance, Compagno dell'Orcagna,<sup>3</sup> Giovanni del Biondo and Niccolo di Tommaso that particularly close analogies are to be found. The fragment here published most resembles the authentic signed triptych by Niccolo di Tommaso in Sant'Antonio Abbate at Naples.<sup>4</sup> Here we see similar proportions in the features, the same characteristic straight nose, the same incorrect shape of the hands, the same rhythm in the folds (especially in the figure of St. John the Evangelist). Niccolo di Tommaso is twice mentioned in documents: in 1365 and in 1366. Mr. Offner<sup>5</sup> has ascribed to this master a number of pictures in Florence, New York, Baltimore and Pistoia on the base of his unique signed work in Naples. To this small list I venture to add the Hermitage fragment, that proves once more the close connection between Niccolo di Tommaso and Nardo di Cione.

The author of the big Madonna with angels (Fig. 4), who for a long time could find no name, is also connected with the school of Orcagna. A confrontation of the Madonna with a signed panel by Giovanni di Bartolommeo Cristiani in S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas at Pistoia shows clearly that both belong to the hand of the same painter. Especially closely related are the figures of the angels and the peculiar type of the faces with fine, elegant features. The Madonna is executed in delicate light tones: the colour-scheme is based on the blending of blue and red with gold. To these colours lilac, azure, light yellow and faded green are added. All the faces are distinguished by a great loveliness, involuntarily calling to mind the lyric note of Sienese art. The general composition of the Madonna can be traced to the pictures of Bernardo Daddi, whose influence is also felt in the facial types. Giovanni di Bartolommeo Cristiani,<sup>6</sup> who is the author of our Madonna, belongs to the as yet hardly studied masters of the Trecento. His Pistoian origin notwithstanding, he must be ranked amongst the Florentine school so

<sup>3</sup> To this master belong only the two panels in the Aeltere Pinakothek of Munich, the polyptych in the collection of the late Count Palfy at Bajmosz, the triptychs in the sacristy of Santa Croce and in the Accademia of Florence. All the other works ascribed by Mr. Van Marle (*The Development of the Italian schools of painting*, III, p. 508-518) to Compagno dell'Orcagna cannot be included into his oeuvre (the three saints in the National Gallery are certainly by Nardo di Cione).

<sup>4</sup> See Khvoshinsky e Salmi. *I pittori toscani dal XIII al XVI secolo*, II, p. 36, fig. 34-36.

<sup>5</sup> R. Offner. Niccolo di Tommaso. *ART IN AMERICA*, Dec., 1924, p. 24.

<sup>6</sup> For bibliography see Van Marle, *op. cit.*, V, pp. 302-305.

closely did he assimilate the general spirit of Florentine style. His name is mentioned in documents between 1366 and 1398. As 1366 is the date of his marriage we may infer that Cristiani was born approximatively in the forties. Except his signed and dated picture in S. Giovanni Fuorcivitas we have from him the very deteriorated frescoes (the figures of the Virtues and the Fathers?) in the portico of the cathedral in Pistoia, executed in 1377-78. On the basis of these paintings Mr. Offner attributed to this master a very interesting triptych in the Acton collection at Florence. To these works, besides the Madonna here published, I would like to add the polyptych in the Florentine Academy, representing the Madonna with six saints and two angels. This polyptych is dated 1383. All the paintings mentioned make Cristiani appear as a very pleasing master. Although Sieneese influences are apparent in his exquisite art with its delicate colouring, he is on the whole a typical disciple of the Florentine masters with whom his whole art is indissolubly connected.

Two fragments, transferred to the Hermitage from the Museum of Christian Antiquities, can with full certainty be ascribed to Spinello Aretino. One of these fragments represents St. Pontianus, the other St. Benedict (Figs. 5 and 6). Both panels formed evidently part of a polyptych. Although the surface of the pictures has suffered severe mechanical injuries, nevertheless the general state of preservation can be considered as good enough, as no traces of restoration are to be seen anywhere. The saints are represented on a golden background; under their feet is spread an azure carpet with a red and gold pattern. St. Benedict wears a white habit and a red cape, richly decorated with a design in gold. In his left hand he holds a blue book. Over the green robe of St. Pontianus a red mantle with a white lining is thrown. On his head he wears a bright blue cap with a white flap. The colours are very strong and bright. The general decorative effect is enhanced by the free use of an intricate golden ornament. The closest analogies to these fragments can be found in the Monte Oliveto altarpiece, executed by Spinello Aretino in 1385. Separate parts of this altarpiece belong to the Fogg Art Museum, to the Accademia of Siena, to the Wallraf Richartz Museum of Cologne and to the Museum of Budapest. The figure of St. Benedict repeats almost literally the identical figure from the right lateral panel in the Fogg Art Museum,<sup>7</sup> whereas St. Pontianus stands very near to the St. Nemesias at Budapest,<sup>8</sup> that formed, together with St.

<sup>7</sup> Fogg Art Museum. Collection of medieval and Renaissance paintings. Cambridge, 1919, pp. 46-54 with accompanying plates.

<sup>8</sup> Die Gemäldegalerie des Museums für bildende Künste in Budapest, bearbeitet von G. von Térey. Berlin, 1916, p. 17.



FIG. 12. ROSSELLO DI JACOPO FRANCHI: MADONNA AND SAINTS  
*Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow*



FIG. 4. GIOVANNI DI BARTOLOMEO CRISTIANI:  
MADONNA AND ANGELS  
*Museum of Fine Arts, Moscow*

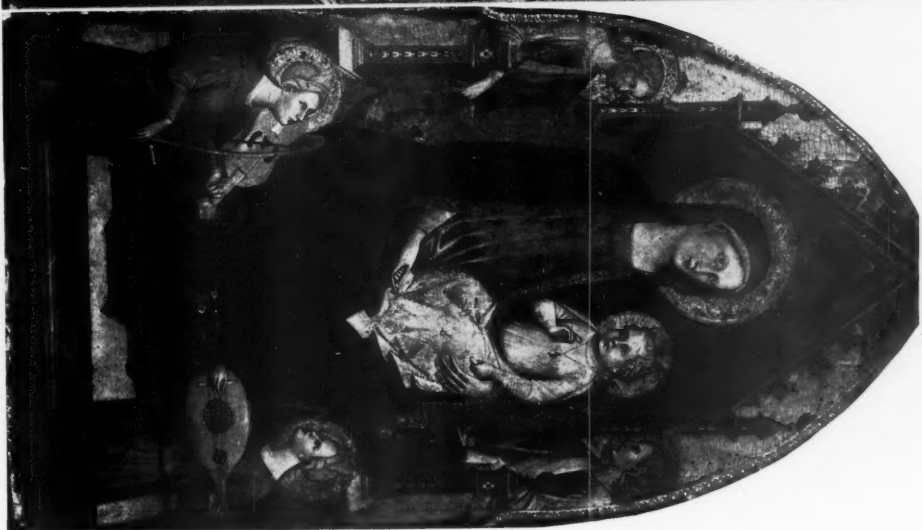
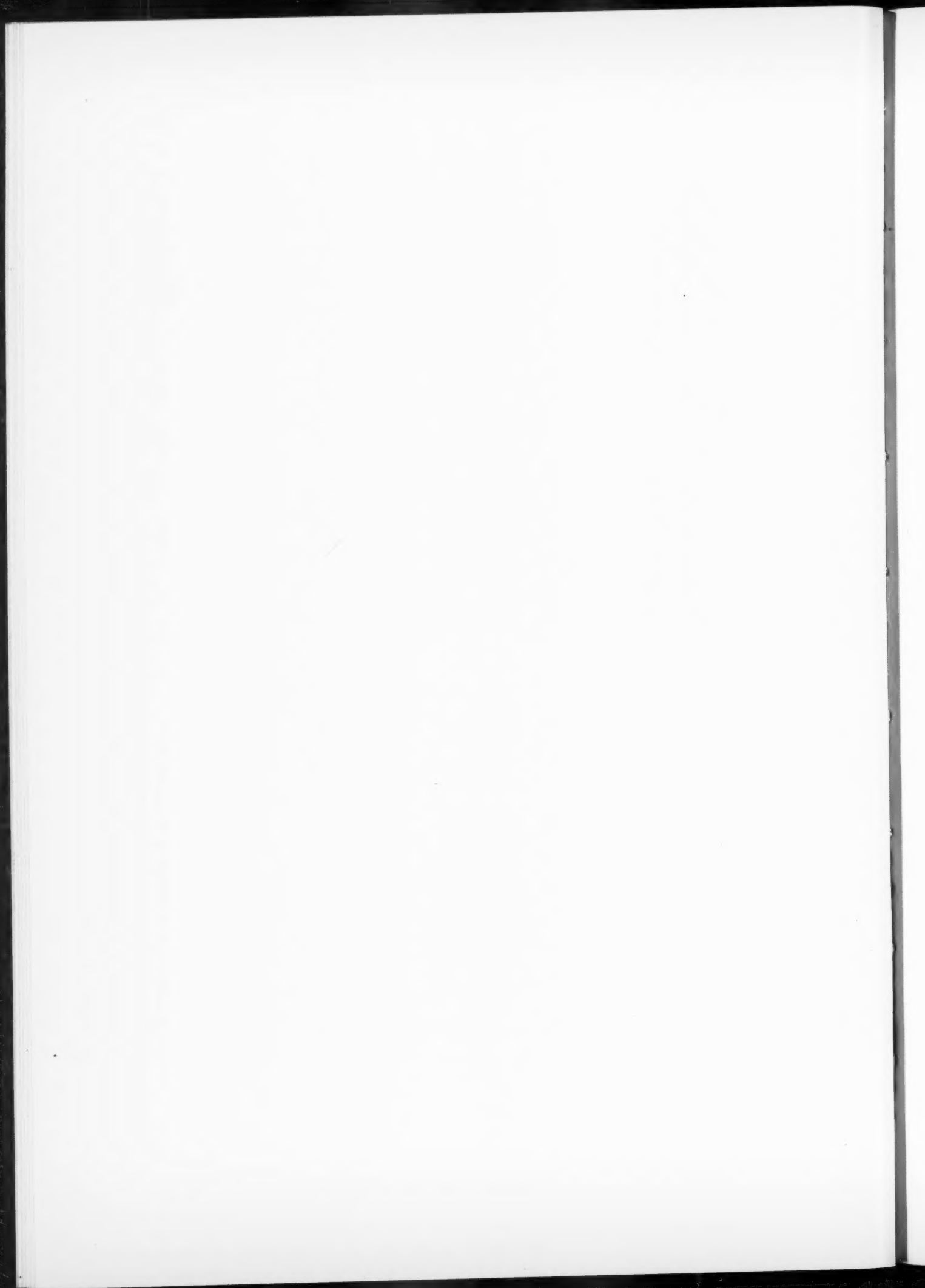


FIG. 7. LORENZO DI NICCOLO GEMINI:  
MADONNA BETWEEN SAINTS AND ANGELS  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*





John the Baptist, the left part of the altarpiece. The analogies mentioned are so convincing that they make further proof of the attribution superfluous. Probably the fragments here published were executed about 1385; in favour of this date speaks, apart from their resemblance to the Monte Oliveto altarpiece, also the fact that they exhibit a sufficiently strong influence of Andrea Orcagna, displayed in the highly developed ornamentalism and in the plastic treatment, which, however, is here subjected to a considerable flattening.

The school of Niccolo di Pietro Gerini is represented by two Madonnas. The first is by one of his closest followers, the other by his son, Lorenzo di Niccolo. The earlier in date is the Madonna with saints executed doubtless by the same disciple of Niccolo di Pietro, who painted the Madonna with saints in the Vatican Gallery.<sup>9</sup> In spite of the coarse treatment of form, the panel, with its bright colouring based on blue, red, green, white and golden tones, does not altogether lack attractiveness. The most typical morphological features in the face of the Virgin are the short chin and the markedly straight nose, repeated in the faces of the saints and the angels. We find the same traits in the above mentioned panel in the Vatican Gallery, that betrays the greatest likeness to the one here published. I am inclined to ascribe to the author of both these pictures also the Madonna with saints in the Florentine Academy and the Madonna with the saints and the Crucifixion in the Jarves Collection, Yale University. The Madonna in the collection of Mr. Ricketts in London (compare especially the type of Christ), attributed by Mr. Sirèn<sup>10</sup> together with the panel of the Jarves Collection, as I think erroneously, to Jacopo di Cione, was also very likely painted by the same master.<sup>11</sup>

The Madonna of Lorenzo di Niccolo (Fig. 7) can be said with confidence to be one of the outstanding works of the late Florentine Trecento. This Madonna figured at the exhibition of paintings of the early Italian Renaissance, organized in 1922 in Petersburg, where it was ascribed to Agnolo Gaddi.<sup>12</sup> It came into the possession of the Hermitage from the

<sup>9</sup> See R. Van Marle, *op. cit.*, III, fig. 354.

<sup>10</sup> Sirèn. Giotto and some of his followers, I, pp. 258, 277.

<sup>11</sup> Mr. Van Marle (*op. cit.*, pp. 627-631) ascribes to the author of the panel in the Vatican Gallery a number of Madonnas in the Gallery of Lille, in the Museum of Brunswick, in the Louvre and a fresco of 1393 of the Madonna in the midst of figures of the seven virtues in the Town Hall of S. Miniato al Tedesco. To my mind these pictures cannot be considered as being all by the same hand.

<sup>12</sup> The State Hermitage. Catalogue of the Exhibition of paintings of early Renaissance. Petersburg, 1922, p. 15. On the frame there is an inscription: A.D.M. AVE MARIA GRACIA PLENA DOMI (?) CCC . . . The date inspires serious apprehensions in respect of its authenticity. It is

Yourjev monastery near Novgorod to which it was brought in offering by the Countess Orlova-Chesmenskaya. The panel is in perfect condition and the original frame has also reached us in a rare state of preservation. The Madonna is depicted seated on a low cushion. She is holding with both hands the smiling Child, who is half-lying on her knees. The Virgin wears a blue mantle over her crimson robe. The mantle of the Child is of a yellow-brown colour with a bright red lining, the cushion white, the carpet red. On the frame are represented four angels and seven cherubs, and below, in medallions, the half-length figures of Christ, St. Catherine and St. Barbara. The forms are treated with a marked precision, the drawing is energetic and firm in character. In its composition the panel described belongs to the type of Madonnas, sitting on low cushions, popular in Florence about 1400 and not altogether forgotten until the beginning of the third decade, as exemplified by the Madonna in Bremen, dated 1423. This type is particularly clearly displayed in such examples as the Madonna by Niccolo di Pietro Gerini in the Musée Calvet at Avignon, and the early Madonnas of Lorenzo Monaco in the Fischer collection in Washington, in the collection Aldo Nosedà at Milan (1405) and in the Fine Arts Museum in Moscow.<sup>13</sup> The general treatment of form as well as the type of the Virgin's face shows that the Madonna here published is closely related to the school of Gerini. A more careful analysis allows its attribution with a great deal of certainty to Lorenzo di Niccolo Gerini, whose works in respect of quality leave those of his father far behind. The now detached polypych by Lorenzo di Niccolo, signed and dated (1402) in San Martino in Terenzano,<sup>14</sup> gives a number of analogies so close to the Hermitage Madonna (particularly in the type of the Virgin's face and in the treatment of the hands (Figs. 9 and 10)) that there remains no doubt that both these panels belong to the same master. The same peculiar type of the Virgin we find in the triptych by Lorenzo di Niccolo in San Leonardo in Arcetri. The folds of the Virgin's mantle are executed in the same style as in the signed and dated (1401) triptych in the Pinacoteca in San Gimignano, where we meet, moreover, figures of saints closely resembling the angels represented on the frame.<sup>15</sup> Finally, the medallions with executed in a somewhat different style and in a more careless hand. It has possibly been done up by the restorer. In its present state it can only be deciphered as 1401 or 1402 (the end of the date is not clear).

<sup>13</sup> See my article "Una Madonna di Lorenzo Monaco a Mosca," *L'Arte*, 1923.

<sup>14</sup> Irene Vavasour-Elder. *Alcuni dipinti ed oggetti d'arte nei dintorni di Firenze*. *Rassegna d'Arte*, 1916, pp. 179-181.

<sup>15</sup> Khvoshinsky e Salmi, *op. cit.*, pp. 58-59.



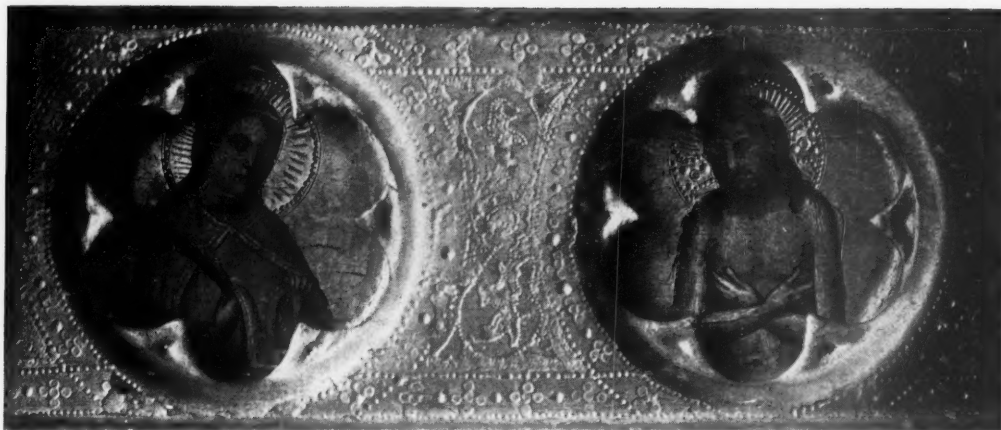
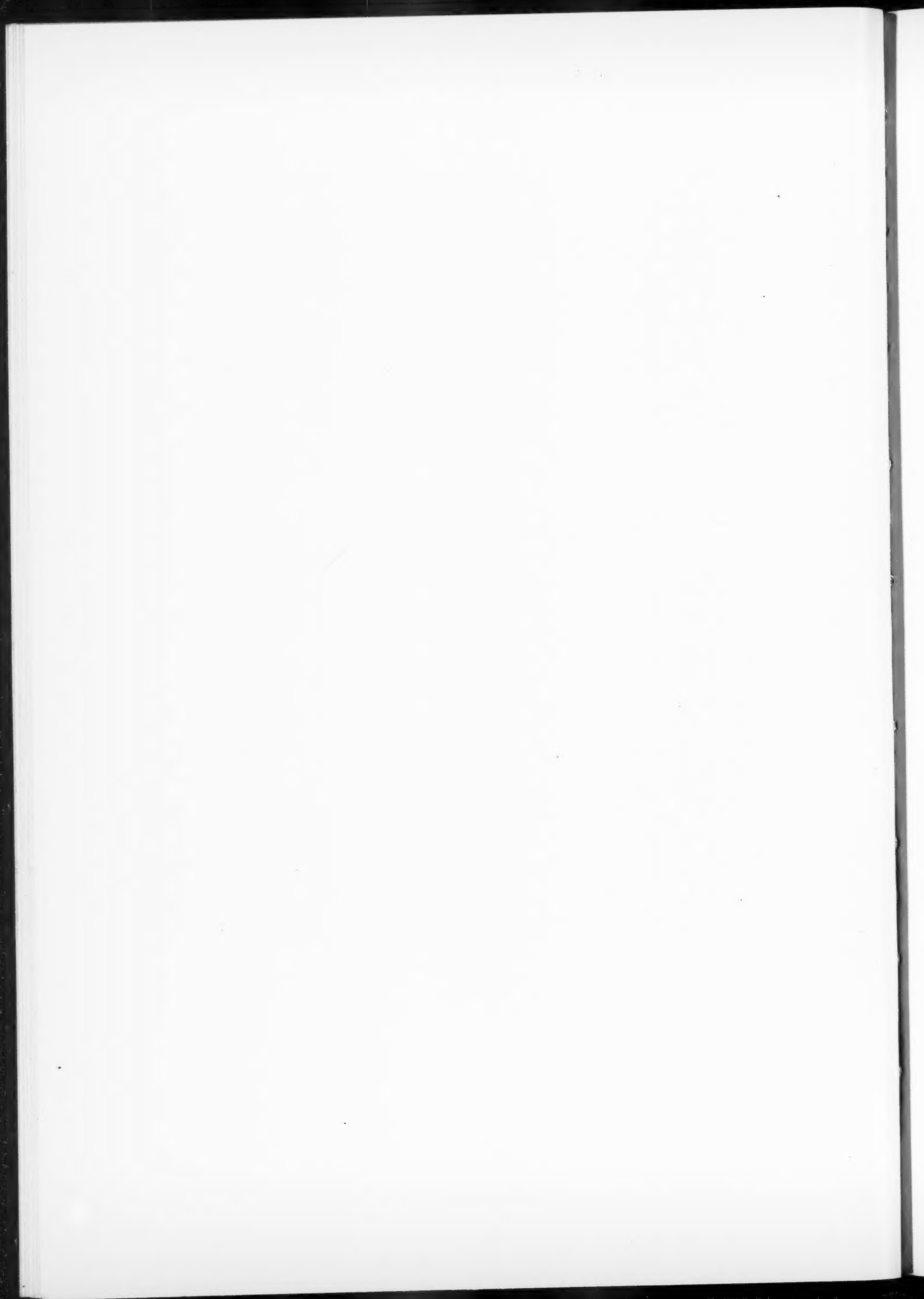


FIG. 11. LORENZO DI NICCOLO GERINI: DETAIL OF THE MADONNA (ST. CATHERINE AND CHRIST)  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*



FIGS. 9 AND 10. LORENZO DI NICCOLO GERINI: DETAILS OF THE MADONNA  
*Hermitage, Leningrad*





Christ, St. Catherine and St. Barbara (Fig. 11) find their closest parallel in the medallions with the half-length figures of saints in the polyptych of Terenzano. In spite of its close relation to the works above mentioned the Hermitage Madonna must be placed somewhat apart and above them because of its superior qualities. The drawing is finer, the forms are more delicate, the modelling much softer. All this leads me to regard it as the most successful work of Lorenzo di Niccolo, lacking the unpleasant harshness, from which most of his pictures suffer and which increased with him from year to year. Taking into consideration that the Madonna here published shows a great typological likeness to the Madonnas of Niccolo di Pietro in Boston, Avignon and the Ryerson collection in Chicago,<sup>16</sup> I am inclined to ascribe it to the earlier stage of Lorenzo di Niccolo's career, when he was still under the strongest influence of his father. Later, the master falls under the influence of Spinello Aretino and Lorenzo Monaco and as a result his style undergoes a sequel of negative transformations. Lacking the force to unite organically the heavy plasticity inherited from his father with the elegance of gothic linealism, he becomes more and more entangled in insuperable contradictions, only to end his career as a languid and colourless eclectic. If, thus, our Madonna is a relatively early work of Lorenzo di Niccolo, it must be approximatively dated about 1400, which finds further proof in its similarity to the above-mentioned triptych in San Gimignano (1401) and to the polyptych in Terenzano (1402).

The last of the pictures now published — a Madonna with saints by Rossello di Jacopo Franchi (Fig. 12) — takes us beyond the limits of the Trecento, as its execution must be ascribed to the third decade of the fifteenth century. Nevertheless the whole style of the panel denotes its close connection with the traditions of the fourteenth century, which find here their full expression. Attributed formerly to an unknown master of the school of Verona,<sup>17</sup> it was then recognized by Professor Romanoff as an incontestable work of Rossello di Jacopo Franchi.<sup>18</sup> The correctness of this attribution is easily proved by a confrontation with the signed Madonna by Franchi in Staggia, where we meet with the same facial type of the Virgin with the high open forehead.<sup>19</sup> Among

<sup>16</sup> See Offner. Niccolo di Pietro Gerini. *ART IN AMERICA*, IX, 1921, pp. 148 and 233.

<sup>17</sup> Muratoff. Notice on some Italian paintings in the Roumiantzoff Museum. *Staryé Gody*, 1910, pp. 9-11.

<sup>18</sup> Romanoff, "Madonna con Santi," an Ikon of the first half of the fifteenth century in the Roumiantzoff Gallery. Report of the Moscow Public and Roumiantzoff Museum for 1911. Moscow, 1912, pp. 77-81.

<sup>19</sup> Berenson. Due quadri inediti a Staggia. *Rassegna d'Arte*, 1905, pp. 9-11.

the numerous works by Franchi, the Madonna in the collection of Sir Hubert Parry at Highnam Court displays a particularly close resemblance to the Moscow Madonna;<sup>20</sup> we see in it the same peculiar type of face, similarly shaped hands, an analogous treatment of the folds. Like most works by Franchi the Moscow panel is executed in light faded tones, suffering somewhat from a too great variety. Pink, blue, yellow, red, green, lilac and gray predominate, standing out effectively against the golden background. By its general character the Madonna presents a very typical specimen of Franchi's art, giving a logical conclusion to the group of Florentine Trecento painters dealt with in the present article, whose ideals the master — a conscious retardeur — carries far into the quattrocento.

## ONCE MORE THE VENETIAN THREE-FIGURE PAINTING IN DETROIT

BY W. R. VALENTINER

*Detroit, Mich.*

IN the last number of the *Art Bulletin*, which appeared in August, 1927 (dated September, 1926), Professor Frank Jewett Mather, Jr., in an article, "AN ENIGMATIC VENETIAN PICTURE," expresses serious doubts regarding the attribution of the three-figure painting in The Detroit Institute of Arts to the three masters named in an old inscription on the back of the canvas: Titian, Sebastiano del Piombo, and Giorgione. He finds the painting altogether of poor quality, and is inclined to attribute it to a *pasticheur* working in Rome about 1600.

Regarding the quality of the picture, I must confess that after having been for years unable to follow Mr. Mather in his suggested attributions to great masters of works of art which seemed to me of inferior quality (from the first article in this magazine in 1914, in which he ascribes a drawing to Rembrandt and another to Velasquez, both of

The painting was reproduced in this magazine in December, 1926, in the article by Dr. Paul Schubring, who is among those who accept the attribution of the masters whose names appear on the back of the picture, and who suggests a plausible subject — that of Jason, Medea and Creusa. This article is not even mentioned by Professor Mather.

which are to my mind Italian, and so on until the last in 1926, in which he treats the "Princeton Raphael"), I am not surprised that we disagree when a case presents itself in which our positions are reversed. It seems to me incredible that one does not see in the Detroit composition that the figure to the left, the blond-haired woman in white, is the work of a great master, whoever he may be, and that the execution of the hair, the sleeves, and not least the hand, which Professor Mather finds so awkward, is superb.

I am glad not to be alone in my judgment. The attribution of this figure to Titian, which of course is based upon the conviction of the quality of the painting, is upheld by critics for whom Mr. Mather undoubtedly has no less regard than I have. Mr. Berenson writes in a recent letter (September 5) that in his opinion "the three-figure painting in Detroit comes out of Titian's studio, and that in every probability the woman on the left is his own handiwork. As for the other two figures, they would seem to represent an *earlier* phase of Titian's activity, and, for reasons unknown, to have been left unfinished." Upon asking Baron Hadeln, the only scholar who has devoted a life time to the study of the Venetian school, for his opinion, I received the following answer (August 24): "I am convinced that the young woman on the left was painted by Titian. Regarding the two other figures, I am not in a position just now to express an opinion, but there can be no doubt in my mind that they too were executed *in the beginning of the cinquecento*." (Underlining in both instances by the writers). It is curious that both scholars came to the same conclusion, independently, and that they are far from being in favor of Mr. Mather's extraordinary dating and ascription, although I will say in justice to him that they are reluctant to give a definite name to the artists who may or may not have executed the other figures. The remarks of these critics contrast strangely with the dogmatic statement of Professor Mather that "no head in this picture could be as early as 1510."

Mr. Mather believes the painting to be composed by a "scholarly amateur" out of reminiscences of Raphael and Titian. He remarks that through the study of the photograph the fact was revealed to him that the "man with the hat is suspiciously like Raphael's brother Beazano in the famous double portrait with Navagero." I wonder if the readers of Professor Mather's article who have taken the trouble to compare the two heads, the one by Raphael and the one in the Detroit picture, have not come to the same conclusion as I: that the only like-



ness between the two men is that they are both rather corpulent types, while the style of the paintings shows clearly enough the great contrast between the soft Venetian modelling and outline of the Detroit picture and the plastic Roman design of the work by Raphael. According to Mather, the model which the imitator used for the female figure to the left is Titian's *Allegory of Avalos* in the Louvre. To my mind the comparison proves only that we find somewhat similar gestures in the two works of the same master, done at different periods of his activity; but how incredible to believe that even the best copyist would have been able to produce from the Louvre picture a figure like the one in the Detroit picture, which, after all, differs from it in every detail. If we compare not only the photographs but also the technique of the originals, I do not see how anyone can doubt that the picture in the Louvre, with the soft and easy touch of its technique, is later than the one in Detroit, where the clear outlines and plastic modelling in a comparatively dry technique are still reminiscent of the first phase of the High Renaissance.

One of the reasons why Mr. Mather thinks that the Detroit picture must have been executed in Rome, a theory which none of the many critics who have spoken or written about the picture have ever thought of, and which is obviously contradicted by the style, seems to be the inscription on the back, which he thinks a "deliberate mystification." The word "Giorzon" is, he says, mongrel, the attempt of a non-Venetian to write the true dialected form "Zorzon." "As for Fra Sebastiano del Piombo, Sebastiano became keeper of the Papal Seal only in 1531." It is not quite clear to me just what Mr. Mather is driving at in this last remark, since the fact he mentions is well enough known and no one has ever thought that the inscription could have been written before that time. As I remarked in my former note, the back of the canvas shows, next to the names of the artists, what appears to be the marks of a collector. It is therefore not likely that it was written earlier than the second half of the sixteenth century. But if it was still written in the sixteenth century, possibly even during the lifetime of Titian or not long afterward, this could be taken as almost documentary proof. But even if it is seventeenth-century writing (and that it is earlier than the eighteenth seems obvious) it is of the greatest importance, as the critical faculty was not so highly developed at that time as it is now, and it is most improbable that the collector who marked these names could have made these attributions from the style of the picture. The prob-



ability is that he noted down a tradition which could not have gone far back and which, compared with its style as we are now able to judge it, was perfectly correct.

I may mention in this connection that Dr. Gronau was kind enough to call my attention to the fact that the Detroit picture is mentioned soon after the middle of the eighteenth century in the Palazzo Sanchi at Bergamo in a German guidebook, of which the second edition was published in 1778, with the following words: (translated) "A curious work in which three great masters have worked together. It represents three half-length figures. The woman in profile is by Titian, the other by Paolo Veronese and the man in the background by Giorgione. One can recognize each master by his style." (D. J. J. Volkmann: *Historische Kritische Nachrichten von Italien*. Leipsig, 1777-78). Besides the interesting pedigree of the picture which is rendered through this description, it seems to prove that the tradition, according to which the picture was executed by three artists, lasted through the eighteenth century, although it was evidently on the wane at the time of the publication of this guide, as is indicated by the fact that instead of the name of Fra Sebastiano for the woman on the right, the name of Paolo Veronese is given, which is, of course, impossible. If this tradition had lasted until the nineteenth century, we may rightly doubt if the name of Cariani would ever have been associated with the picture by modern art critics.

As for the spelling of Giorzon, I am informed by Italian scholars that there is not the slightest reason for the statement of Professor Mather's that "it is an attempt of a non-Venetian to write the true dialectal form, "Zorzon"; for in Venetian writings of the sixteenth century we often find mixtures of the dialectal form with the common spelling. If we know the many different spellings for the name Giorgione in contemporary documents, such as, Zorzi, Zorzo, Zorzon, Giorgio, Giorgio, Giorgione, etc., there is no reason why a Venetian should not have used once the spelling "Giorzon," especially since the writing of the two other names points clearly to a Venetian writer. Even Professor Mather agrees that the spelling of the name of Titian without the "o" at the end is typically Venetian, and if he had read correctly the name Sebastiano, which is also spelled without the "o" (Fra Bastian), he would have to agree that two of the three names show Venetian dialectal forms, while the third, Giorzon, has at least a typical Venetian ending, which he already acknowledges.

The theory that the picture was executed in Rome and not in Venice is just as artificially constructed as the one that the connoisseur of about 1600 should have conceived the idea to compose a work in the style of paintings by the three named artists which were executed almost a century before. How can one attribute to a "scholarly amateur of about 1600" the ability to imitate three artists who worked at the beginning of the cinquecento, to such a degree that art critics of today could be deceived by it? One may possibly imagine such an ability by nineteenth century or modern forgers, but that artists in this early period, even when they tried to forge an earlier style, worked unconsciously in the style of their own generation, so that it is now obvious to everyone, can be proved by the forgeries after Dürer and Lucas von Leyden which Luca Giordano fabricated. Although he copied whole parts of the compositions of the earlier masters, no one nowadays would think for a moment that these paintings with their baroque lines and strong contrasts of light and shadow are early sixteenth-century rather than seventeenth-century work.

## THE CAVES OF AJANTA THE MOST FAMOUS FRESCOES IN INDIA

BY S. G. WARTY

*Bombay, India*

THE very commendable work which has been undertaken at a considerable cost by the Archaeological Department of the Nizam's Government, for restoring the frescoes at the famous Buddhist caves of Ajanta, brings to mind the circumstances under which these caves, having lain hidden about a thousand years, were discovered about a century ago and revealed to the world generally. It is said that in about 1819 a British officer, retired from the Madras army, was hunting round for tigers in a jungle close to the Ajanta village, when he met a young boy looking after a herd of buffaloes. The boy, hoping to earn something from the *sahib* by showing him the actual home of the tigers, led him a little way off from where he was standing and pointed

in the direction of the caves. The officer saw through the thick, green foliage a little golden red colour peering between a few mauve carved pillars and feeling himself to be about to make an important archaeological discovery employed the village men to hew down the tangled clusters that throttled up the entrance to the caves and make a clearing. Thus it was that a passage was forced into these long-forgotten caves which had flourished from about the third century B.C. to the seventh century A.D.

The paintings of Ajanta are all of religious inspiration and have frequently for subject the life of the Buddha in previous incarnations — in the guise of elephant, deer or wild goose. As Sir John Marshall has remarked, they are the finest example of painting in ancient India and perhaps in the whole of Asia. One painting of preëminent beauty and grandeur is the one in cave seventeen, of which the subject matter is the return of Buddha after his enlightenment to his wife and son, Rahula. According to Sri Mukul Chandra Dey, who had copied the frescoes and has written a book on the Ajanta caves, "this painting must be one of the most majestic and tender in the world, showing intense love and spiritual devotion, and to many will be a revelation of the heights to which Indian art has attained. His glorified figure towers above the night sky and his feet rest on a white lotus on a deep Indian red ground. In his right hand is a begging bowl and his left hand uplifts his yellow robe, over him an angel holds a canopy of flowers and Parijata flowers also fall upon him from heaven, while wife and a child on a balcony of the house, look up in adoration."

The methods followed by these ancient artists of these Buddhist paintings were also very interesting. They first sketched the outline with Indian red and brush, after which they gradually modelled the figure. Then came the colours and once more on top of all, another outline. The highest lights, the deepest shadows, and the most delicate touches of colour were then applied and finally black was used for details such as eye-brows, hair, etc. It is said that the colour used in painting the frescoes was the rock colour prepared from the little diamond-shaped black, vermillion-red, and yellow stones which even now lie scattered in millions all along the banks of a stream near the caves. It may be mentioned here that rock colour is even now used by Indian village artists in executing huge images of gods and goddesses.

Cave nineteen at Ajanta is said to be one of the great architectural triumphs of the world. It is about twenty-four feet wide by forty-six

feet long by twenty-four feet high and is elaborately carved with sculptures and ornamental decorative designs, both inside and out, and they happily remain as distinct at the present day as when they were first wrought. The arrangement for the lighting of the interior of this cave is simply wonderful. The daylight, introduced through one great opening in the facade, throws the brilliant light on the altar, the principal object, and also upon the capitals of the pillars exactly where it is most needed. The spectator himself stands in the shade. The light on the floor is subdued and the roof and the aisles fade into comparative gloom.

### NEW ART BOOKS

CARLO CRIVELLI. By Franz Drey. Small 4to. Illustrated. F. Bruckmann. Munich. 1927.

Mr. Drey's scholarly and exhaustive essay upon the life and work of Crivelli supplies a real need. The painter's works are all well reproduced and fully and carefully described. The author is conscientious and reserved in his opinions and accepts no pictures as 'authentic' autograph productions which are not convincing in themselves. His volume ranks as a work of authority upon its subject and should find a place in all art libraries.

A HISTORY OF ITALIAN PAINTING. By Oliver S. Tonks. Illustrated. 12mo. D. Appleton & Company. New York. 1927.

Prof. Tonks of Vassar College has written a very satisfactory comprehensive history of Italian painting, well adapted for use in colleges, high schools and art study clubs. The characteristics of the various schools are exemplified in the works of their preëminent figures and this manner of treatment of the subject enables the student to reach a definite understanding of its aesthetic and historical importance. The chronological arrangement of the text on the other hand helps one to visualize the development of Italian painting and to place its monuments in proper perspective. Appendices include a note on Technical Terms, List of Artists and Important Works and a List of Recommended Books.

ITALIAN PRIMITIVES AT YALE UNIVERSITY. By Richard Offner. Illustrated. 8vo. Yale University Press, New Haven, Conn., 1927.

This scholarly essay upon the Italian paintings in the Jarves collection should extend the fame of this notable gallery. In the way of scientific study and criticism it is the best contribution of its kind now available devoted exclusively to an American collection. Dr. Offner presents revisions of several attributions made by Siren and other authorities, and with a display of evidence sufficiently convincing to give credence to his arguments in their behalf. His contemplation of the pictures results in no extravagant praises of their aesthetic qualities or historical value, but inspires a dignified estimate of their relative merits and beauties and meets and satisfies a real need.